

## Claim Amendments

1-4 (Cancelled)

5. (Currently amended) An extension pole arrangement comprising at least one pole segment, each pole segment being substantially identical and comprising:

first and second tube portions, said first portion of a given diameter and extending longitudinally from said second tube portion and terminating with an open end;

said second tube portion having an open end with an inside diameter greater than the outside diameter of said first tube portion, and configured for receiving the first tube portion of an existing ~~additional substantially identical~~ pole segments;

said first tube portion including a locking mechanism configured for coaxing mating engagement with an aperture in said second tube portion for receiving said locking mechanism; and

whereby said substantially identical pole segments are conjoinable.

6. (original) The extension pole arrangement of Claim 5, wherein said second tube portion is of substantially reduced length comparable to said first tube portion.

7. (original) The extension pole arrangement of Claim 5, wherein the open end of said first tube portion includes protective means mounted thereto.

8. (original) The extension pole arrangement of Claim 7, wherein said protective means is a resilient insert compressibly mounted into the open end of said first tube and protruding outward beyond said open end.

9. (Previously presented) An extension pole assembly, comprising:

a first pole segment including:

a first hollow cylindrical end portion; and

a second hollow cylindrical end portion having an external diameter smaller than the internal diameter of the first end portion, and having a protective cap inserted therein;

wherein the second end portion of the first pole segment is received into a first end portion of a second pole segment, the second pole segment configured substantially the same as the first pole segment so that an extension pole assembly having a protective cap is formed without removal of the protective end cap of the first pole segment.

10. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 9, wherein the second end portion of the first pole segment and the first end portion of the second pole segment are removably connected by a locking mechanism positioned therebetween.

11. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 10, wherein the locking mechanism comprises an aperture positioned on the first end portion of the second pole segment for receiving a spring mounted push button positioned on the second end of the first pole segment.

12. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 9, wherein the protective cap protrudes beyond the end of the second end portion and is held in place by compression.

13. (Currently amended) An extension pole assembly, comprising:

a plurality of pole segments configured substantially the same and capable of being joined together, each pole segment having a first hollow end portion; and

a second hollow end portion having an external diameter smaller than the internal diameter of the first end portion, and having a protective cap inserted therein;

wherein the second end portion of one pole segment is received into a first end portion of a subsequently added ~~different~~ pole segment so that as each successive pole segment is joined together an extension pole assembly having a protective end cap is formed without removal of the protective end cap of any other pole segment.

14. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 13, wherein the second end portion of one pole segment and the first end portion of a different pole segment are removably connected by a locking mechanism positioned therebetween.
15. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 14, wherein the locking mechanism comprises an aperture positioned on the first end portion of one pole segment for receiving a spring mounted push button positioned on the second end of a different pole segment.
16. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 13, wherein the protective cap protrudes beyond the end of the second end portion and is held in place by compression.